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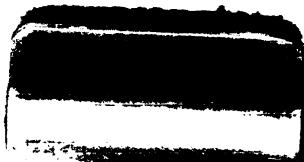


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THE
Life and Death

OF THE

MERRY DEUILL OF EDMONTON.

WITH THE PLEASANT PRANKS OF SMUG THE SMITH,
SIR JOHN, AND MINE HOST OF THE GEORGE,
ABOUT THE STEALING OF VENISON.

By T. B.



LONDON:

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SMUG'S GHOST.



VHEN with ayrie essence sempiterne
You might a body (now in dust discern),
I was of many set by for my mirth ;
Good company I lou'd with all my heart
And like a boone companion playde my part :
(It was fore-spoken at my houre of birth.)

Hart-eating sorrow nere with me remainde
While I your shape as I have said retainde,
My cogitations were all ayrie, light :
I neare lou'd hoorder, nor the hoording sinne,
That coyne my labour brought me one day in,
I spent in pleasure ere the next daies night.

Mad Maister *Peter*, and my red fac'd *Host*,
My dapper *Parson*, whom of all I most
Entirely loued for his merry vaine;
And *Bancks* the miller, that poore thin cheek'd knave,
That holpe to beare my body to the graue,
Were men of mettle; of a perfect straine.

These men and I, made up a matchlesse crew,
For merry meetings till the ground look'd blew,
Wee'd sit and send our soaking healths about,
Weed sometime theeve together in the darke,
To fetch a feast of venison from the Parcke.

Then grant my ghost this, though our bones be rotten,
Our names may liue and neuer be forgotten.



THE
LIFE AND DEATH
OF THE
MERRY DEUILL OF EDMONTON.

The Introduction; with a description of Maister Peter Fabell.

MAISTER *Peter Fabell*, otherwise called "The Merry Deuill of Edmonton" (for the many excellent ieafts he did) was a man of good discent: and a man, either for his gifts externall, or internall, inferior to few. For his person he was absolute. Nature had neuer showne the fulnesse of her skill, more in any then in him. For the other, I meane his great learning (including many misteries) hee was as amply blest as any.

Very pleasant, kinde, and free-hearted was hee to or with his familiars: very affable, and curteous to strangers, and very liberal, full of commisseration and

* Peter Fabell. "Here (i. e. at Edmonton) lieth interred under a seemelie tombe without Inscription the Body of *Peter Fabell* (as the report goes) upon whom this Fable was fathered, that he by his wittie devises beguiled the Devill: belike he was some ingenious conceited Gent^a. who did use some sleightie tricks for his owne disports."—See Weever's *Funeral Monuments*, fol. 1631, p. 514; and Norden's *Speculum Britannia*, Middlesex, p. 18.

pittie to the poor and needy; both abroad from his purse, and at home from his table.

In his time very well knowne to him, and sometime (in pastime) very familiar with him, were these men; *Oliuer Smug*, *Sir John** the merry parson, *Banks* the Miller, and mine Host of the *George*, in whose companies many times for recreation he would spend some houres. In Edmonton he was borne, liued and died in the reigne of King H. 7.

How Maister Peter deceiued the Deuill with a Candle's end.

At the first entrance of *M. Peter* into the art of magick, by charmes, spells, and incantations, he raised a spirit, and with the spirit concluded, that if he would be obedient to him, serue help, and further him at such times and in such things as hee should command, his soule should bee his reward. This fire-brand of Hell (with great sign of reioycing) yeelded and serued him (as his slave or vassalle) with very great diligence, in many matters and employments. When this officious servant thought hee had beene at his commande long inough (for no terme or time was set at the contract) hee demanded his com-

* This is one of the many instances which might be given where a parson is called Sir, "upon which," says Sir John Hawkins, "it may be observed that anciently it was the common designation both of one in holy orders, and a knight." Fuller in his Church History says, "that anciently there were in England more *sirs* than *knights*;" and so lately as the time of William and Mary, in a deposition in the Exchequer in a case of tythes, the witness, speaking of the curate whom he remembered, stiles him *Sir Gyles*. See Gibson's View of the State of the Churches of Door, Home Lacy, &c. p. 36.

mander's soule, as the rewarde of his paynes. Why (sayde Master *Peter*) I haue made thee a promise thou shouldst haue it, and thou shalt haue it, but not yet: when it hath left my body (by my death) take it to thee; till then thou mayest not haue it, so rest thee contented.

Then the spirit began to threaten and terrifie him, to make him set a time of payment for his pleasure; and so affrighted him, that hee knew not what or how to answer him. Come (quoth the Deuill) be breefe, for Lucifer every minute lookes for that soule of thine. Is there no remedy (quoth Maister *Peter*); wilt thou allow me no time to set my businesse in order, and take my leaue of my friends ere I goe? allow mee some small time for that, and doe thy will. Why how long time (quoth the Deuill) desirest thou that I should allow thee? why i'faith (quoth Master *Peter*) no long time; spare me but till this inche-long end of candle (pointing to the candle burning in his study) and take my soule. Well (quoth the Deuill), though by my charge I can hardly stay a minute, I'll stay so long; — about it presently. If I neglect or ore-slip my time (qd. M. *Peter*) take thou the advantage of it; yet one request more thou must grant me. What is that (qd. the Deuill); marry this (qd. M. *Peter*) to confirme thy promise with an oath: I am very loathe to trust thee on thy bare word, for all the world reputes thee but a knaue; therefore come sweare to forbear me till this candle is burned. By Hell I will (qd. the Deuill), and by great Lucifer, as I hope to draw downe thousand soules to the deepe Abisse (the place of my abode), I will forbear thee till that candle is burned; — when Maister *Peter*, presently after his hellish protestation, put the candle out, and into his pocket.

Looke here (quoth hee); till this is burnt thou maiest not claime my soule. I'le keepe this safe enough from burning out, and so keepe that thou lookst for safe enough. Go, I command thee, and tell thy proud Lord Lucifer, how finely I haue overreached thee.

When the Deuill saw he was so cunningly deceiued by Maister *Peter*, with many bitter execrations he left him.

How Maister Peter deceiued the Deuill againe.

Not long after the Deuill had bin thus deceiued by the merry Deuill, Maister *Peter Fabell*, hee went againe to him, and finding him a sleepe, tooke the end of the candle, before spoken of, out of his pocket, and awaked him. When he had so done, he shewed him the end of the candle.

Looke heere (sayd hee); heere is that thou keptst to keepe mee from my right (thy soule, I mean); when this is burnt, thy soule must burne with mine. I'le quickly burne it now, (I'le warrant thee).

When Maister *Peter* saw he had lost his candle (upon the losse of which lay the losse of his soule, if his policie had not once more helped him out,) he intreated him to spare him a little longer.

No, no, (sayd the Deuill,) all intreates are vaine; thou hast deceiued me once, thou shall deceiue me no more. 'Tis a good world, when men are so cunning in deceit, as to deceiue the Deuill. But it is no matter, thou art so much the redier for me.

Yet heere me speake (quoth Maister *Peter*), and as thou likest my speech so deale with me.

Well, be breefe then (quoth the Deuill). What hast thou now to say?

No more but this (qd. Maister *Peter*); If thou wilt spare till my timely death, put that thou seekest into thy hands: I'll labor all the time I haue to liue for Hell's advantage: I'll beare more soules along with me to Hell then twenty of your cunningst Deuills shall. Shall I once more trust thee (quoth the Deuill) on thy word? Well, sweare. Why (said Maister *Peter*) by the blacke riuer, *Lucifer*, thy Lord sweares by, I sweare I will; and when I am buried, either within the church, without the church, in the church-porch, church-yard, street, field, or highway, take thou my soule.

Well (quoth the Deuill), in hope thou wilt gaine me many soules to thine, take thy rest; and so he left him.

Many yeares after, when Maister *Peter Fabell*, by his white haire, weakenesse, aches, and such like signes, perceived he could not liue long, he went and digd his deathbed in the church wal, and there rested day and night, hartly praying and repenting him of all the euill he had committed.

When the hower was well nigh come, that should sepe-
rate his soule and body, the Deuill went to him againe,
and blam'd him for neglecting his businesse by promise,
and withal told him he was come for his soule. When
Maister *Peter* heard that word, hee presently started up
and charged him to depart. My soule (sayd he) thou
comest too soone, and yet too late to haue it; he that
redeemed my soule hath took't to keepe; thou canst
not haue it.

Didst thou not sweare (qd. the Fiend) that I should

haue thy soule at the houre of death : thou didst, and I will haue it. I, (sayd Maister *Peter*), when I am buried, either within the church, without the church, in the church porch, church yard, street, field, or highway, take thou my soule.

See, foolish fiend, thou art deceiued again : this hole is my graue. If this be either within the church, without the church, in the church porch, church yard, street, field, or highway, my soule is thine : thou seest it is not, therefore I charge thee (so deceiued) depart. Still the Deuill was very eager on him for his soule ; till at last, by his earnest praier and zealous invocations, he forst him to run roaring to hel againe without it.

How Maister Peter Fabell punished a Fryer and his Lemon for their knauery.

Maister *Peter Fabell*, one morning very early, walking the fields (as his custom was, to meditate by himselfe,) spied a Fryer at prayers upon his beads, very deuoutly. When Maister *Peter* saw him so earnest in his praier he went to him, and demanded of him what his reason was that his chamber would not serue for his prayers as well as that place. Oh ! Sir (sayd the Fryer) all places are alike to me for this businesse, and all times, for I pray when the prick of conscience commes upon me, in what place or at what time so euer. I commend thee much (quoth Maister *Peter*), thou art an honest fellow, and so for that time they parted.

The next morning Maister *Peter* went againe, and againe found this Fryer in the place where he left him

the morning before so deuoutly praying, but not at that holy exercise; the spirit did not moue him, unlesse the euil spirit mooued him; for instead of his booke and beads he had got a wench, and sat colling her so close, and kissing her so thicke, kisse upon kisse, that she could hardly fetch her wind for him. A good while stood M. *Peter* behind a hollow tree, unseene, seeing them ticke and toye together; at last, to fright them from their uenery, he went into the tree, and with a beauey hollow voice, cried out to the Fryer in this manner: Fryer, Fryer, Fryer. The Fryer, hearing a voice, presently started up and looked round about him, to see if he could finde the *Maister* of that tongue that called him: but in vaine he stood looking, for he stood farre enough from his eye, though he were close to his eare. When the Fryer had stood a good while looking about him, first on the one side, then on the other, and could spy nobody, like a kind letcherous bald-pate, very handsomely, or rather very knaushly, he went to his wench againe. Hee was no sooner layed downe, but *Maister Peter* the second time cried out (to disturb him) Fryer, Fryer, Fryer. At this second call, the Fryer, halfe affrighted, started up againe, and lookt about him, (a tip-toe,) to see if hee could finde a body to that voice, but hee found none.

Now our Lady defend us (quoth the Fryer to his Wench) what voice is this that calls on me so oft? Didst not thou heare it? Yes, faith, sweeting (quoth she) I heard some body call to thee; canst thou not see him?

No faith, chucked, (quoth the Fryer) I can see no man; and yet surely his voice is the voice of a man. But it is no matter; let it be what it will, if we cannot see it,

sure we cannot feele it; come chucked, let's busse and be merry; be of good comfort and crosse thyself, and I warrant thee safe for a farthing. Downe lay ould bald pate againe; but before he could give her three kisses, the voice raised him the third time, crying as before, Fryer, Fryer, Fryer. Then the Fryer's face beganne to betray his feare; he had no more colour in his face, at that time, (though at all other times he had colour enough) then one of these fine whay-fac'd oatemeale eaters, or a wench troubled with the greene sicknesse.

Fryer, Fryer, Fryer, (said Maister *Peter*) (still keeping himselfe close in the hollow tree) hee that sees thee now, unseene of thee, sees at all times, in all places, and all these thy actions.

Heere yesterday I saw thee at thy prayers verie deuotly, with thy booke and beades: is this the book thou bringest to pray on now? doth the pricke of conscience moue thee to doe this? speake thou blacke sinner. There thou hast red thy damnation without present repentance and pennance. Therefore presently, both of you, if you respect no more the good of your soules, then of your bodyes, by the pennance I shall appoynt you, purge your selues. When the Fryer and his Wench heard these wordes, they were verilie perswaded in their mindes that it was the voice of an Angell. They both kneeled downe very reuerently together, and sayd, Thy will be done; appoint our pennance, and we are ready (with all willingnes) to indure it.

Then (sayde Maister *Peter*) you both shall presently be whipt, from this place (the place where you offended) into the town and about the town. This suffer, and desire you to be done by the next man comes neere you,

and this sin is forgiuen you ; refuse this, and despairing die damd wretches.

This, or what else it shall please thee to inflict, or lay upon us, for this sinne, (quoth the Fryer) we will presently suffer.

Then Maister *Peter* presently stept out of the hollow tree, and went (verry cunningly) round about on the back side of the hedge, and came directly upon them, as if he had ment to passe by them.

As soone as euer they saw him, they very humbly on their knees tould him, that in that place they had offended, and for that offence, they were, by the voice of an Angell, commanded to take present pennance, or their soules could not be sauéd.

And what (saide Maister *Peter*) is the pennance commanded ?

Marry this, Sir, (said the Fryer) to be whipt by the next man came neere us, from this place (the place where we offended) to the towne and about the towne, and this sin should be forgiuen us. If we refuse this, (this was our heauie sentence) to liue in despaire, and die damd wretches.

This, therefore, is our request, Sir, (you being the man by the Angell appointed) that you would performe your part appointed, while we (very patiently) beare the reward of our wickednesse.

Well (quoth Maister *Peter*) though I am loath to play the beadle, I'll doe thy request ; you shall not be damd for want of a whipping.

To be short, Maister *Peter* tied the right hand of the Fryer, and the left hand of his Wench together, and hauing so done, (with a sound smarting rod of willow) jerkt them to the towne before him.

There, in the view of all the people, he lasht them from one end of the towne to the other, telling them at euery second or third stripe, of the haniuousnesse of their fault. When he had thus soundly whipt the lecherous bald pate and his Lemman, with most pittiful bloody backs, he left them, and loosing their hands, he gave the Fryer his caueat.

Take heed good Fryer, of Venus fire,

You see the hire of foule desire.

And so farwell; I haue done your request; if at any time you haue occasion to use me in such a peice of seruice, command me. Away went he very hartily laughing, and the Fryer and his Wench very heauily weeping.

How Smug won a wager of Maister Peter Fabell by a tricke that he did.

As one day Maister *Peter Fabell* (an excellent scholler and well seene in the arte of magicke) was conferring with certaine of his friends, about certaine business and imployments, *Smug* being in the hearing of them, betweene druncke and sober, (for he had beene plying the pitcher in Maister *Peter's* sellar) ran nodding in amongst them, and the very first words he spake to them was, how doe you? my Maisters. They being in very serious talke, unwilling to be disturbed with his foolish babling, with very faire wordes, requested him to leaue them a little, and within halfe an hower (or such a thing) they would giue him the hearing of that he had to say to them. But he (like an importunate beggar) tould them he would not leaue them till he had spoke his minde to Maister *Peter*.

When they saw there was no remedy, but he would

haue his will, come (sayd Maister *Peter*) honest *Oliver*, be breefe, utter thy ignorance roundly. What hast thou to say to me now? Marry (quoth *Smug*,) Maister *Peter*, I heere say you are a very cunning gentleman, and that you haue done as many fine trickes and feates in your time as ere a Jugler in all Europe has done. What will you say now, if a plaine fellow, a hard-handed laborer, a poore leatherne apron-wearer, do such a cunning trickes as you, M. *Peter*, with the helpe of all your great gogle-eide, bottle-nos'd, blobber-lipt, bladder-cheek'd, beetle-browed, ore-headed, detestable Deuils, cannot doe the like. Why honest *Smug*, (qd. M. *Peter*) who or where is he that will do this? Marry (qd. *Smug*) I am he. Art thou he (quoth M. *Peter*) who would thinke thou hast such trickes in thy budget? I prithee, *Smug*, tell me, dost not thou (as thou saiest I doe) use the helpe of some infernall? hast thou no Deuill in thy trickes? come tell me. Devill (qd. *Smug*) marry God blesse me, M. *Peter*, I cannot indure to looke upon these filthy foule-mouthed fire spitters; no, Maister *Peter*, what I do, I will doe of my extraordinary witt and inuention. Well let's heare (qd. M. *Peter*) what is it you will doe. Marry this I'll doe (qd. *Smug*) He set a candle burning in the midst of this roome where we all are, open and easie to be seen as my hand. This candle M. *Togood* shall see M. *Dauby*, M. *Douty*, Mistris *Friskin*, and my man *Ralph* heere, yet you shall not see it, masse *Smug*; (quoth M. *Peter*) if thou canst doe such a trickes, thou putst me downe indeed. Come begin, let us see it done. Nay, first (quoth *Smug*) let us haue a lay upon it; I'll not shew my skill for nothing. Agreed (qd. M. *Smug*); what shall the wager be? Why faith (qd. *Smug*) M. *Peter*, you know my minde for that. I loue alwayes,

when I make a wager, rather to have it wet then drie; for you know, M. *Peter*, I am dry of my selfe, and ye say the word, the wager shall be a dozen of double ale. You know I am merry *Smug*, and merry *Smug* must have his merry go down, or els he is no body. Well, I agree, (qd. M. *Peter*), heere is my hand, if thou perform'st what thou hast sayde, I'll loose and I'll pay it. Then *Smug* cald for a candle and candle stick, which when he had he placed M. *Peter* in the middle of the roome, and set the candle stick, with the candle burning in it, upon his head; now M. *Peter*, sayd hee, do you see this candle? why no, (qd. M. *Peter*) how should I see it? is it possible for a man to see the crowne of his head? you cannot see it then, (qd. *Smug*); no, I cannot see it, sayd hee. Then *Smug* demanded of the rest (before named) whether they did see it or no? they all answered I, asking how they could chuse but see it. Why looke you (quoth *Smug*), al these see it, and yet you cannot see it; they say they cannot chuse but see, and yet you say it is impossible for you to see it.

Come Maister *Peter*, you know what you have lost? and there had been a kingdome laide on it; when Maister *Peter* saw how prettily *Smug* had ouer-reached him, he (smiling) sent for his losses, and in pastime made *Smug* take his well woon liquor so soundly, that he lay by the walls for the night.

How Smug, when he was mad drunke, would needs go to fight with the shadowe of a sworde and buckeler.

Smug one day being angred amongst a company of true drunkards (like himselfe) came chafing out of the ale-house like a mad-man (as you know drunkards and

madmen are not much unlike) vowing to be reuenged, or hee would neuer drinke draught of good drinke againe as long as he had a day to liue, and so chafing, reeled homeward as fast as his leggs would giue him leaue.

This reeling infirmity threw poore *Smug* from poste to poste and from wall to wall; heere he knockt his face against one stocke, there against another, till halfe the wilde blood in his body was runne out at his nose.

Still on he staggered, till he came to a seate (neare his home) under a sign of the Sword and Buckler, where he sate a while to rest him, and as he sate like an honest man, carefull to keepe both ends together, cast up (as neare as he could without either pen or counters) what he had receiued in the day before.

But all his casting could not cast the remembrance of his quarrell out of his minde, for stil he sate railing against his pot companions most greiuously, calling them scoundrels, scabes, slaues, knaues, and perpetually damd drunken rogues.

As he sate thus fretting and chafing, vowing to be reuenged, hee spyed (as he thought) the instruments of reuenge lying before him; for it was a faire moone-shine night, and the shaddow of the signe he sate under seeme to him to be no lesse then that it came off the very sworde and buckler that hung over his head unseene or unthought of.

Now you rogues and raggamuffins (qd. *Smug*) I'll ticle you y'faith; I'll eene make no more a doe, but take up my tooles and to them againe; by *Pharoh*, by this sunne that shines, saide hee (and looked up to the moone) I'll kill them all, though euery one of them had as many

liues as a cat : presently stooping to take up his supposed sword and buckler, hee fell flat on the ground (for his head was so heavy, that when hee had put it downwards he could not raise it up againe for his life). There lay hee, sprawling and groping about to get his sword and buckler into his hands, so long, that hee fell fast a sleepe, and waked not till morning he was fetched home by a couple of his honest neighbours.

How Smug laid a wager with certaine Shoormakers that he was a Shoormaker, proued it, and wone the wager.

Three or four honest good fellowes of the gentle craft, traouelling together with Sir HVGHEES bones at their backs to get worke, passing through EDMONTON, went to an ale-house (the very next doore to Oliuer *Smugs*) to drinke, where, when they had sitten a quarter of an houre or thereabouts, drinking healthes (very kindly and curteously) one to another, and to all good fellowes of their craftes and acquaintance, to make themselves merry, they sung a song in three partes very orderly and well. *Smug* (as hee was at his worke) hearing them sing so merrily, presently left his worke and went to them amaine, bearing in either hand a full cann of the best liquor. Heere my old lads of, mettle (quoth hee) heeres to you, and to all good fellow shoos-makers in Europe, of which number (for want of a better) I my selfe make one.

Why, Sir, (quoth one of them) are you one of the gentle craft? faith (qd. *Smug*) I am as I tell you, an honest good fellow, and a shoos-maker, and for the love

I beare to all kinde shoo-makers I haue made thus bould to come and drinke with you.

They all (very curteously) welcomed him into their company, and made him sit downe amongst them.

When they had sitten a pretty while together, drinking and singing very merrily, one being a mad wag amongst them (aboue all the rest) suspecting *Smug* to bee (as hee was indeede) a smith, looked very earnestly upon him, and about him, to finde something about him that might truely tell him whether he was as he sayde he was, yea or na.

At last, prying very narrowly, he spied his hammer hanging underneath his apron in a great round brasse ring.

Then halfe angrie with *Smug*, because hee toulde him hee was a shooemaker and was not, hee begann to ieast, flout, and scoffe at him, shewing to the rest of his fellowes and companions the hammer that hung under his apron.

Why (sayd another of them), my honest friend, came you hither to flout us? Wherefore have you tould us you are that you are not? Why (quoth *Smug*), what did I tell you that I was? Why (quoth hee) you did tell us you war as wee are, a shooe-maker. I did indeede (quoth *Smug*); I toulde you so, and againe I tell you so, and will make good my words upon a wager with the best of you all. Agreed (quoth one); what shall the wager be?

Why faith (quoth *Smug*), I thinke you doe intende to trauell no farther than this Towne to night, and you say the word the wager shall bee a shot of fife shillings to bee spent in sheare drinke: what say you, Sirs, are you

contented with it? If you be, strike handes, and a match.

A match (sayd they). I know (sayd one of them) you are a Townesman, and therefore we shall not need to goe farre for a touch-stone to try you.

Presently came a seruing man into the Ale-House to SMVG, and desired him, for God's sake, to giue ouer his drinking and to goe to worke, for his Maister's Horse staid for shoes. What doe you thinke, my Maisters (quoth *Smug*), you see I am now sent for, and must goe presently to put on a paire of shoes; will you yeeld you have lost? Why looke you heere then, my mad bullies; heere's a shooe (pulling a horse shooe out of his pocket) of mine own making; what say you now? Am I a shoo-maker, yea, or no? A shoemaker! (quoth one of them), heere is a shooe indeede, but it is a Horse shoe. Nay (quoth *Smug*), I'll prooue it to be a shooe and no Horse shooe, for I made it for *Mosse* his mare of ENFIELD; but be it Mares shooe or Horse shooe, a shooe it is, and I the maker, ERGO, I am a Shoo-maker, because I made it: therefore, come, deliuer your purses of a fīue shillings piece, or so many small pieces as amounts to so much, and let us stand close to our liquor, for I thinke long till I see it.

The Shoemakers for all this wold not yeeld they had lost, but would needs haue him into the Towne for furthe' triall: but all gaue judgement on *Smug's* side, that hee was a shooe-maker, and had wone the wager. Then the Shoo-makers, when they saw there was no remedy, turnd backe with *Smug* to their old hostesse, and paid their losses, with the losse of their wits for that night.

How merrily Smug answered one that gave him good counsaile.

Smug one day being set in the midst of his mery mates, swaggering and swilling very quicke in carousing and calling in for more, as if he had *Fortunatus* his purse in his pocket, was by an honest well gouerned man, that sate by (and noted his humor) sharpely reprooued, and after reprehension kindly admonisht, with these ensewing verses :

If thou the name of husband good wouldst haue,
Then toile to get, and getting, getting saue :
For hee, his gettings cannot wisely keepe,
Shall wake withe care when sauers soundly sleep.

To which *Smug* merrily and very readily made this answer :

Alas, good Sir, good husbands name,
My dad neare had before me :
For me to ha't then, t'weare a shame,
As long as Kate will scorne me.
(As parson plie-pot counsellis heere),
I'll freely take my liquor ;
It makes good bloud, the sight more cleare,
And a dull wit grow quicker.

And so fell to his liquor againe, til (contrarie to his merry answer), it made his quicke wit grow duller ; for within one halfe houre or more, he had not one wise word to spare, though he might have had a king's ransome for it.

How Smug was frightened by the Nuns of Chestone, thinking them to be spirites, and how afterward he frightened them by his suddaine appearance.*

Smug on a time, as he was stealing venison, hearing the Keeper in the Parke, got up into a tree to keepe out of sight till hee were past by him, which he did; scaping the keeper's eye, and so consequently his hand very handsomely. But sitting there a little while, prying and peeping betweene the branches (like an owle in an ivy bush), to see if the coast were cleare, he spied the mother nun of *Chestone*, with three or four young ones (attired in white long robes, with railes and tippets, (as they used to weare), comming towards him, with a little bell† rung before them, sprinkling holy water, and praying upon their beades very devoutly; with all the circumstances of that ceremony they used when they receiued a sister into that holy order.

The very sight of these holy creatures made *Smug* quiver, quake, and shake like the leaues of the tree hee sate upon, for he thought verrily they had beene *Spirits, Furies, Fiends, or Hobgoblins*, that had come thither a purpose to carry him away for stealing of venison,

* At Chestone (in Hertfordshire, now called Cheshunt), there was a Benedictine Nunnery, dedicated to the Virgin Mary. It was founded before the year 1183, and augmented with lands and tenements of the canons of Cathale, in the twenty-fourth year of king Henry the Third, but yet upon the general dissolution it was valued only at £14. 1s. per aun. See *England Illustrated*, 4to. 1764, vol. I. p. 318.

† This little Bell, which is rung to give notice of the Host approaching when it is carried in procession, as also other offices of the Romish Church, is called the *sacring* or *consecrating* Bell.

but they (poore soules), ment no more harme to him, than he to them, but past by, not casting so much as a looke upon him.

When they were past him, his heart (that till then was a heauie as a poore pittifully paind spittle mans) was as light as a *Morris dauncers*: and very lightly (from knot to knot), gote he from the toppe of the tree, thinking to have runne to his fellowes that stayed for him, but by that time he was gotten doune from the bowes to the roote, the Nuns was turned backe againe upon him.

When hee saw there was no way to get from them suddainely hee stept right before them, and (upon his knees with a streacht throat), like an ould bawling broome-man (desired them for God's sake not to hurt him, and he would neuer walke so late a dear-stealing againe while he liued, and still he pawled and bawled (with his hands claspt together in very pittiful manner), as though he would haue rent his wind pipe.

This good old nun, so suddainely incountered by such a roaring raggamuffin, knew not what to do, but ranne as fast from him as ere shee could, and all her young ones after her, like so many young ones after the dam. Shee run not so fast one way to leaue him, but he run as fast tother waies to leaue her, and to finde out his fellowes. When he had found them, he tould them (in boasting manner) how he met with a company of Spirits in the parcke, and they durst not abide the sight of him. Therefore be of good cheare, my Masters (sayd he), if Spirits be affraid to looke upon mee, and run so fast from mee, I hope the sneaking keeper dares not abide my furie, and so they past on againe to their theeuings pastime.

How Smug, presuming upon his courage after this exploit (frighting these supposed spirits), would needs go the next evening againe a deere stealing, and how deare he paid for it.

The next evening *Smug* and his fellowes went againe a deere stealing, but it was a deare deere stealing to him and the rest of his companions, for they had not beene in the parke aboue a quarter of an houre, priuily peaking about for their prey, but they spyed the keeper well weaponed with his great mastiue dog at his heeles. Now out alas! sayd the parson, what shall we doe my maisters? what shall we doe? Good Bancks, as thou art an honest miller, and wouldest haue me pray for the forgiueness of tole-dish sinne, tell me what I shall doe.

Why, alas! good Sir *John* (quoth the Miller) what should I tell you? I know neither what to doe nor say for myselfe; what sayest thou *Smug*? thou seest we are all in danger. I preethe, good *Oliuer*, as thou louest a good fellow and good fellowshipe, as thou lovest that thou knowest wee all love, good liquor, give us some good counsell, and good *Smug* be breefe, for thou seest our destruction is at hand.

Why, alas! my masters, (sayde *Smug*) what would you haue me saye or doe. By *Vulcan* I protest I knowe not what to say to you: I would I were at my forge, you, good Sir *John*, a sleepe in the bellfrye, and Bancks in his mill; or I would we were all there, that wee might be as safe as a theefe in the mill.

As they stood there prating and talking the one to the other, they saw the keeper comming directly towards

them. Oh, now, *Smug*, (quoth Sir *John*) sticke to us, all my trust is in thee; I preethe, good *Smug*, shew thy selfe as valiant now against this keeper, as thou didst against the spirits and *Hobgoblins* thou meetest heere the last night.

If thou beest remembered, thou gauest us wordes of comfort then, and didst bid us all be of good cheere, and feare nothing, for thou wouldst make the sneaking keeper fly from thee as fast as thou madst them flie. Now, honest Oliuer, be as good as thy word, make them flie and defend us; and I, euen I, Sir *John*, your mad-merry parson, will pray to God for thy health and welfare as long as I haue a day to drinke in: why, content you Sir *John* (sayde *Smug*) I'll see what I can doe; go you two and lie close behind that hedge. If I haue but as good lucke against this scurvie keeper this night, as I had against my little long-taild hobgoblins the last night, wee le not leave the parcke without what we came for. They (as *Smug* tould them) went behind the hedge, and left him alone to deale with the keeper: but, alas! for all his big looks and brauing wordes, the keeper thwackt him so soundly that hee made him lye sprawling on the ground, and so left him.

When the miller and parson (peeping through the hedge) saw the keeper gone, and poore *Smug* lye in such a pittiful case, they went to him. Now, alas! poore *Smug* (sayd Sir *John*) how ist? What cheare man? I perceiue your furious lookes could not fright away the Keeper, as it did the spirits you tould us of.

Oh, Sir *John* (sayd *Smug*), this Keeper is a deuill; hee hath payd me, yfaith; and yet all these blowes greeue me not so much, Sir *John*, as that you and my

neighbour Miller did not stay to take part with me, for you would haue had your share in the venison as deepe as I; and I had thought he had beene worse to deale withall then *Spirits*, the Deuill should haue dealt with him ere I would have come into his clutches.

Smug had no sooner spoke this word, but the Keeper was upon them againe, and mightily intraged against them all, gave the miller and the parson as much as hee had giuen *Smug*, and sent them all halting home together.

How Smug was reuenged vpon a Barber (his riual) that made him kisse his tayle.

As honest *Smug* loued (as he loued his life) the societie of his bearded associates, so in like manner loued hee, sometime, to bee mad merry amongst a mad company of his bare-chind boone companions, his little wanton wagtailes, his sweet and twenties, his pretty pinchineyed pigsnies, &c. as hee himselfe used commonly to call them.

Amongst all the kinde lasses hee used to keepe company withall, one aboue all he best loued, and by that one aboue all he was least loued: for fine *Phillippe*, the barber, had so labored in trimming his best-beloved *Barbara* (for so she was called), that hee, when hee came to her, was welcome as water into a ship—bad newes to a sore greeued person, or the shaddow of a man to the longing mistris of a long-kept maidenhead.

To be short, one evening *Smug* went to see his sweet *Barbara*; but when hee was come where he thought to haue bene very kindly welcome, to the house of his best

beloued, to his great greife hee found the doores locked, bar'd, or boulted against him: shee hee lookd for, lookd not for him, nor any other at that time; for she (as any kinde whore will be) was content with one at once, and one she had. The Deuill had put the Barber and shee together, and she was very loth that any man should put them a sunder. A good while *Smug* stood knocking, but nobody would stirre to let him in; then he went to the window, and there he kept a whewing and a whistling to raise her, but all would not doe: then hee fell to knocking with his knuckles against the casement, and at last raised the Barber out of *Barbara's* bed, not in his owne likenesse, but in the likenesse of *Barbara*, his best beloued; for the Barber, like a subtile knaue, slipt on his bed fellows petticoate, night-raile, and head-tire, which became his hairelesse face, as well as hers it was made for, and so went to the window in *Barbara's* apparell, he spake *Barbara's* voice as neare as he could, and passed as currantly, with *Smug*, in conference, as could be wisht. After many louing words, *Smug* desired hee might haue a kisse ere he parted, for the Barber (for *Barbara*) had told him he might by no meanes be let in at that time.

This kind he-she very louingly yeeldes. I preethee, sweet *Smug* (qd. this fine counterfeit), come, busse mee through this broken pane; that I will, y' faith (qd. *Smug*), with a good will as eare I came from schoole, or went to the ale-house. Then I preethee, sweet *Smug* (quoth the Barber), come smake mee quickly—come smake me quickly, that I may to bed againe, and tomorrow I'll meet thee where thou wilt appoint me. Why come, sweet heart (qd. *Smug*), I am ready, and thrust his lips as

farre as he could into thorough the broken pane against *Smug's* lips; the Barber, instead of his lips, turned his AR (his lips I should haue said). *Smug* smackt and smackt that sweetly fūe or six times together, ere he could tell what he kist. At last hee perceiued he was plaid the knuave withall and by whom; yet in pollicy very patiently put it up, and with these words tooke his leaue:—Farewell, sweet *Barbara*; for the kindnesse thou hast showne me at this time, for all thy former kindnesse, and these sweet kisses, I rest by thee to be commanded, whensoever, wheresoeuer, and in whatsoever, thou pleases; and so, sweet *Barbara*, for a while God be with thee.

To bed went the Barber againe, and *Smug*, as fast as he could foot it, homewards. As late as he was when he came home, he found all his folkes hard at worke, and a heate in the fire ready to be stricken out. *Smug* presently took the yron out of the fire, sparkeling hot, and ran as fast as he could backe againe to *Barbara's* window, and there very hastily cald for his sweet *Barbara*, desiring her most heartily to let him haue one busse more, and he'd raise her no more that night. The Barber presently started up to the window againe, as he had don before, and (as he had don before) set his buttocke close to the broken paine, thinking that *Smug* (as he had don before) would have kist them; but instead of kissing, or putting his lips too, he put his hissing hot yron to him, and made him fly from the windowe as fast as if the great Deuill himselfe, and halfe a dozen little ones, had bene at his taile. Now (qd *Smug*) my neate trimmer, I haue trimd you about the hips as wel as you haue trimd me about the lips. As you like

this, play the knaue with me another time, and so farewell, good plaster-maker; hie the home, and clap a plaster to it quickly, or thou't feele me when thou dost not see me. When *Smug* had thus reveng'd himselfe upon his riual, he left him crying and fretting, and went laughing home againe roundly.

How Smug foxt the fellow that went to cornute him in the Fox chamber.

Two brothers (young gallants in Edmonton), who had often made them-selues merry with *Smug's* company, had an equall desire to cornute, or in plaine termes, to cuckold, honest *Smug*, eene on that night of his wedding-day, not so much drawne to it by her beauty (for she was but a homely smug lasse) or any part or quality in her, as a desire they had to do him that wrong, and especially uppon that night. Priuie strife was betweene them, plotting and contriuing to one to deceiue and preuent the other. Upon the wedding-day, as opportunity serued, the elder brother got the bride into a corner, where he spent many perswasieue words to win her to accord to his (as he called it) louing request. Many of poore *Smug's* faults and imperfections he layd open, and withall his purse, with very large proffers, to drawe her on the more easily; but all could not doe; she lik't neuer the worse of her *Smug* (whom she had taken that morning for better for worse) for the dispraising of him, nor the better of him for his large proffers, and therefore wild him to giue ouer his unhoneste suit, and be packing; for she was not a woman (howsoever she seemed in his eie) of that unchaste disposition. This

and many such like answers she made him, as very willing to be rid of him, but could not; for he (scorning to shew a bashfull blush) came upon her still, after her crosse answers, with a fresh supplie of smooth words, and left her not till he made her (with the appointment of place and minute) make him promise that he should haue his desire; but, alas! that promise past not from her heart, for she was of a settled conscience, that no meanes might mooue her, neither proffer, person, or any other inducement whatsoever, to prooue false to her *Oliuer*.

When he had thus receiued his answer, and was gone, his younger priuily set upon her to the same purpose, and with the answer he had was sent away very pleasant, but his expected pleasure was his paine in the end. For she, as soon as euer they had left her, acquainted her groome or bride-groome with their purpose, and tould him that ten aclocke was the houre, and the fore chamber the place appoynted, wishing him for that night to lie there alone in her stead, ready to receiue them, or any of them. When *Smug* understood by his wife (though he was almost past understanding) the knauerie that was practised against him, after two or three smacking busses, and thanks for her kindnesse in telling it, he began to talk to himselfe in this manner: Aha, my little mad jingle-spurs, would you be nibbling? would you, yfaith, lads? I'le have a bate shall bate your bouldness a little. I'le fore you, yfaith, come to the fore chamber as soone as you will.

To be short, a little before the time appointed, *Smug* got him to bed in the fore chamber, against they or one of them should come. About the time appointed, both

the brothers met in the dauncing-room or hall, for they must passe through that to the one prepared to perform their promises; but this unhappy meeting had almost mar'd all, for neither of them durst enter in the other sight.

By and by, before a minute of the prefixed time was past, the younger slipt in whilst the elder stood talking amongst the dauncers, and to bed he went. Hee was no sooner got into his hostesse (as he thought) but *Smug* stept out, and with an old dry boot he had (laide ready for that purpose) so belaboured this yong mutton-monger in his shirt, that he had bene as good haue had a sound whipping as that basting.

Aha! (quoth *Smug*) I'le fore you, yfaith, boy, doost thou thinke mine host of the George had a whore to his wife? No, thou lecherous babone, *Smug* is better liked off in his frize or sheepe skin, by his owne *Smug* lasse, then ere a spruce sleeked gallant of you all.

Why, I preethee, good *Smug* (quoth the youngster) be contented; if I haue made thee a fault, I will make thee amends. Nay, alas! (qd *Smug*) tis no fault, I rather account myselfe (for the kindnesse you would haue shewn to me) in your debte, but I'le pay you ere you and I parte; and about him he layd againe. Then *Smug* made him slip on his cloathes, and beate him out a doores. When the elder brother, who all the while he was, as he thought, in the fore chamber with *Smug's* wife, saw how he was guld by her and basted by him, he smilde to himselfe, to think how well he was rewarded for his forwardnesse, and how cleanly he himselfe had escaped that scouring.

Why, how now, brother (said hee), what's the matter?

hath your bedfellow beate you? Is she such a deuill? How chance you pleased her no better? Please her (quoth he); the Deuill please her and him too: they haue pleased mee, a plague on them. But it would haue pleased me better, brother, if you (as it was your desire this evening) had had my place.

Why, brother, you may see (quoth the elder) what it is to be so forward in seeking to deceiue your elders.

Well, come brother, let's goe home and sleepe honestly, for we see what's got by tempting honesty. He has taught thee, and thou has taught mee, to take heede how we enter into any such action againe. Then home they bied them hand-in-hand, one smiling and iesting, and the tother petting and chafing, cursing poore *Smug*, his wife, and the fore-chamber extreemely.

How Smug, being drunk, lost his fellowes in the Parke; and how, when they got together, by whooping and hollowing, he tooke them for theecues, and would by no means know them till he was soundly thawackt by them, and made to know his friends from his foes.

Another time *Smug* was fetch'd out of the alehouse by sir *John*, the Miller, and mine Host of the George, in such a case as it had bene fitter he should haue gone to bed to sleepe, then to the parke a deere stealing; but, drunke as he was, they would haue him along with them, for without him they were nobody; he must need goe, though he could hardly stand alone.

Well, to the Parke they got him with what great adoe, consider of the case he was in, and imagine, when they were entred into the Parke, and were ready to enter

upon their businesse, they serued themselves every one to his appoynted standing, with their weapons for that purpose, as cross-bowes, long-bowes, and staues.

Smug, he was set (because he was not in case to take a steady aime) to watch that the Keeper came not upon them before they were aware; but while they were close at their busines, their centinell (honest *Smug*) forgetting both where he was, and also what charge he had taken in hand, went reeling downe the Parke, cleane out of sight and hearing. When Sir *John*, the Miller, and the mad Host, had strooke the stroake, made them all glad men, and bound their prize up handsomely together, they went to fetch their centinell; but when they come to the place where they set him, he was not to be found. Body of me (qd Sir *John*), what shall we do? Kinde neighbours and friends, what shal we do? Honest *Smug*, with his head full of liquor, is gone God knowes whither; I pray Jove he be not falne into some of these ditches. That I hope he has not (qd. mine Host), he was wet enough before. Why, what a mad knave is this *Smug* (qd. the Miller), he is sure a-sleepe somewhere. Faith, then (qd. sir *John*) we were best giue ouer seeking for him by the eye, and try what we can do, by the voice. Then they fell to whooping and hollowing as loud as they could, that *Smug* might heare, and answer them. A good while they went whooping and hollowing, but *Smug's* eare was to far off for their voices to reach: they could by no meanes heare that answering hollow. The babbling eccho answered every whoope they made, but *Smug* not one. So long they walked whooping and hollowing up and down, that the discoverer of euery bad action that morning was ready to discover theirs;

and yet *Smug*'s hollow could not be heard. At last, when they had giuen ouer hollowing, and were going without him, they heard him whoop. Hush (qd. Sir *John*), I thinke I heare his voice; from whence comes it? Masse and I heare it to (qd. mine Host), but from whence I know not. Why, then (quod the Miller) we were best by our hollowing to keepe him hollowing still, and so we shall come to him, I'le warrant you. They did as the Miller counsilled them, and within lesse then a quarter of an houre had sight of him.

When they were come neare together, Sir *John*, out of the loue and good will he bore to *Smug*, stept forward before his fellowes, and with an outstretched arme and smiling countenance, would have embraced him.

But *Smug*, in his drunken humor, not knowing him to be sir *John*, nor that the Miller and mine Host that followed him, to be his old honest familiar copes-mates, took him such a knocke ore the pate, that he made M. *Parson* stagger like himselfe, though their causes were much unlike. Why, how now, *Smug* (qd. the fiery-faced Host) wilt thou fight with thy friends? (qd. *Smug*), Foot, you rogues, do you come to rob me? Keepe out, keepe out, I advise you, and you meane go home againe, and see your wife and children (if you haue any); keepe out: by *Pharaoh* you all die else.

Why, I preethe, *Smug* (qd. the Miller) put downe thy weapon, we are all thy friends. I preethe, *Smug* (qd. mine Host) put thy staffe on thy shoulder, and let's go home together. Dost thou not know me? Come, give me thy hand.

That I will (quoth *Smug*)—there—and knockt him on the pate with his staffe. There is a hand for thee;

and still stood striking at them, laying about him like a mad man.

When they saw he would by no faire intreaty come to the knowledge of them, they all layed at him, and well, and so soundly basted his sides; and by that time they had thwackt him soundly indeed, his wits were come to him.

When he knew his friends from his foes, and desired them very kindly, (every man by his name,) to hold their hands, and very orderly and well, helped his fellow theeues to beare home their booty.

How Smug was deceiued of his red cap by his wife, and by that deceit forst to leaue his swaggering company, and go with her home to his labour.

Amongst diuers articles that were agreed upon betwixt *Smug* and his wife, to be kept unuiolated on either part, this was one.

That day that *Smug* had his red cap on (which cap he called his cap of maintenance) he was like a lord of misrule, to haue rule and dominion quer his wife, both at home and abroad; that day he had to spend at his own pleasure; to card, dice, drunke, drab, domineere, and do all that it pleased him to doe, without any interruption or contradiction: but, without that cap, he might doe nothing but what stood with her good will and liking.

If any time he were gaming, drinking, domineering, &c. without this cap of authority, if his wife come into the place where he was, and did but hold up her finger,

he was presently to giue ouer his company, obey, and follow her home to his businesse.

One morning, betimes, *Smug* was called from his worke by a company of true tospots (like himselfe) to go a fore-catching; forth he went with his red cap upon his head, swaggering and swearing among his most abominable boone companions, like the captaine of a gally Foist.

First they tasted liquor in one house, then in another, then another, and so from house to house till they had not left an ale-house in all Edmonton untasted.

At last, when their braines began to be dizzy with running so long in this maze of good fellowship (as one euill leades to another) they went all as wise as wood-cocks to a house of iniquity, and there they dranke and swaggered helter skelter, and to make them leape more the lustily, they sent for a noyse of minstrels, and after that pittiful noise, the treble and the bag-pipe, they dannst all out of measure, one while this creeking musicke would go creeping after them like a tyred follower after his leader, and another while it would run so fast before them, that they were faine to run more then a lackey pace to ouertake it.

In the midst of this merry pastime came *Smug's* wife fretting and chafing into the roome to fetch him home, but he by no meanes would giue ouer his pastime: it was his day, and he would spend it at his pleasure.

When she saw hee was so far in that hee could hardly be got out, she fell to intreating, desiring him very kindly to go along home with her; but the more she intreated, the more he stood against her.

Why, thou confounded cockatrice, (sayd he) doth thou not see my cap of maintenance, my scarlet con-

loured cappe. Am not I to doe my pleasure without checke or controule so long as this cap is on my head? Away! be gon, or by the life of *Pharoah* I'll bebumble thee. I tell thee, so long as this cap is on my head I will not bee crost in mine humor. Then she perceiued it was but a folly to seeke by intreaty to get him home, and yet shee was very loath to leaue him behinde her in that disordered company.

A good while she stood musing with her selfe, what she were best to doe to get him along with her, in vaine she studied not, for her study begat a tricke that effected her will, and that was this.

Shee took her man *Ralph's* gray cap from his head, and very handsomely, when she saw her husband was busie in talke (and had lost the sence of feeling) she tooke his red cap off, and put the gray cap on in the stead of it.

When she had so done, she plac'd her selfe right before him againe, and held up her fingir (for, as is before said) at the holding up of her finger, he was to fulfil her pleasure, his red cap being from him.

When *Smug* saw her finger up againe (little thinking of her subtilitie) he was angry, and out of his anger said thus to her.

How darest thou presume to hould up thy finger? and see this (pointing to his red cap as he thought); downe with that finger, or I'll downe finger and body and all, by the life of *Pharaoh*, now by broad chek'd *Bacchus*, thou sweet smiling God of good fellowes, I will; shall I be crost in my humour? if my red cap were at home and I heere, I would obey thee, but being both heere I will not.

Why, you are deceiued (qd. shee); your red cap is not heere, and therefore you must and shall along with mee; look heere; is this your red cap (sayd she, and tooke it from his head to shew it him); I pray you looke upon it well.

When *Smug* had lookd upon it well himselfe, and had asked the miller's and the merry priest's judgment of the colour of his cap, and found it to be a gray cap, he looked as pale as a poore despairing debtor at the sight of a serjeant, or his cut-throat creditor: and presentlie yeelded, made a low legg, tooke his leaue of his company as handsomely as he could, and reeld home with his wife very louingly.

How Smug was taken by the watch, and set in the stocks for abusing of them, and how he kept such a coyle with whooping and hollowing vnder a sicke woman's window, that the constable was faine to set him at liberty, and glad to be rid of him.

Drinke and goode fellowes had kept *Smug* out so late one night, that the watch, as he walked homewards, had him in examination, both where he had bene and about what businesse.

Smug, halfe fusseld, or (as many tearme it) somewhat rugged, answered euery demand very crosly, where-uppon the watchmen (as men in authority will) taking it for a great presumption that he should answer them so unhappily, grew very chollericke, and in their heate of anger stroke him, and heau'd and shou'd him betweene them, as they would haue shooke him to fitters. But as before this rigorous usage he coulde not well brooke

their wordes, he could now well worse brooke their blowes, and therefore resolved as before he had giuen them one cross word for another (I, and perhaps returned them with the vantage) seeing they were so ready to giue blowes, to giue them blow for blow.

So long as he laid about him with his hammer (for that was his *Morglay*) that scarce two of halfe a dozen that began with him, would stay to make an end with him.

By and by came the constable with the bloody runnawaies to beare *Smug* to the stockes (which stood under the constable's window). With much adoe, they dragd him to them, and with as much adoe got in his legg. When they had thus set him fast they left him, and euery man returnd to his place againe. Being thus left alone, he fell to singing to passe away time as merrily in the stocks for once, as he had done in the ale-house many a time and oft. He was as well furnished with odde pieces of baudy ballets and drunken catches as a man of his profession might be: which so roundly troud out as he sate, that the constable's wife was faine to send down her maid to desire him to sit quietly and hould his tongue: how, hold my tongue (said *Smug*) no, though maister Constable haue a tricke to force me to hould my leggs still, he wants a trick to make me hould my tongue still.

But I preethee, wench, tell me from whence or from whom comest thou to bid me hould my tongue? marry (sayd the maide) I dwell heere; you sit under the chamber window where my mistris (who sent me) lyes very sicke. How sicke? (quoth *Smug*); I preethee tell me lasse who is thy mistris. Marry (quoth she) the constable's wife. How! (sayd *Smug*) the constables wife! what his wife

that set me heere? I, euen his wife (qd. the maid); therefore I prethee good fellow be quiet. I will, I will (said *Smug*); go tell this mistris I will not sing one song more to disturbe her. I prethee do not good fellow (qd. the maid), and so went up againe to her mistris. She was scarce in the chamber with her mistris, deliuering his answer, but hee was as loud and farre louder than he was before, though not in the same manner, because of his promise; for he had turnd from bawling like a ballet singér, to shouting, whooping, and hollowing like a forester. Such a noise he made as hee sate, with hollowing and whooping, (as if he had bene a hunting) that maister Constable's sicke wife could by no meanes take a minute's rest by him.

Twice or thrice shee sent her maide downe to him againe to desire him to be quiet, but as often as she sent he strained himselfe to raise his voice higher.

Nay, yfaith (qd. *Smug*) your husband set me heere. I thanke him, and do you thanke him, if I be a trouble to you, for setting me so neare you: blame not me, for (yfaith) I must be doing somewhat to make myselfe merry. When he had thus tould her his minde, he fell to whooping and hollowing againe.

Then she sent for her husband, thinking by his presence to still him, but he being with him *Smug* was ten times worse than when he was from him, for he playd the knave so on purpose to crosse him.

When maister Constable sawe that neither faire meanes nor foule could make him hould his tongue, and that by the noise he made his wife grew worse and worse, he commanded his beadle (or some other undere officer)

to let him out, and desired him very kindly to goe quietly home to his dwelling.

Thus honest Smug by 's knauery
Got 's heeles againe at liberty.

How knauishly Smug was dealt with by three or foure of his fellow drunkards, and how he broke the glasse that shewed him the shaddow of his owne face.

Smug in his time had plaid many mad pranks by many, and one day it was his chaunce to light into the company of three or foure mad consorts, that plaied the knaue as well with him, as euer he had plaid the knave with any.

When they had spent a fore-noone in quaffing together, and fild him with liquor (which he was very easily intreated to take), and so full fild him, that he was to heauy to stand or goe, they led him out of the ale-house into the church-porch; and there laid him all along on his backe upon a bench.

Under his head (instead of a cushion or a pillow), they put a cricket, or a little joint stoole (such as children use to sit on in the chimney corner) and under his feete, a great rough hewed free stone.

Yet as hard as they laid him, he slept as soundly as if he had bene laid downe upon a bed of downe; and laye with such a grace as few smithes (I can tell you), can lye, for he had upon his head his red cap, his cap of maintenance, buttoned up before, with a faire feather of a peacock's taile in it, bound about with a camation silke ribben, his leather apron turnd round together, and wound about his middle, his hammer hanging (hanger like) by his side, and both his hands in his pockets.

Thus lay *Smug* at length, like the image of Duke *Humphrey*, ouer his long agoe consumed carkas, or his dust earth and ashes.

Had honest *Smug* (thus lying), bene grated about with some pittifull *Epitaph*, or a death's head, and *memento morie*, and his sleepe lasted as long as the sleepe of one of the seauen sleepers, I am persuaded he would haue had more spectators than the richest monument that stands either in *Saint Pauls-Church* or *Westminster*.

But to the matter—when (as he lay thus) the mad crewe that laid him so, saw he was as deepe in sleepe as drinke, they began to worke their wils upon him in this manner.

They got a handfull of small coals, which they beate to powder, and hauing beate them to powder, put them into a dish of faire water: when they had well mingled (like right daubing painters), their small coale powder blacke and water together, and made a perfect coale-blacke, without either size or any such like settling stuffe, they laide it on his face, which was reasonable blacke before, not leauing so much white or red to be seene as a small pinne's head will couer.

When they had thus beblackened and besmouched him, with his *Deuill's* looke, they left him (snorting on the porch-bench) till he should either wake of himselfe, or be waked by the sexton, or some other kinde of bald-pated officer.

There he slept soundly three or foure houres without moouing, till at last, with a remooue that remooued him from the bench to the ground, he waked, and after long stretching, reaching, and yawing, got up upon his feete.

But, alas! when with much adoe he was got up, hee had as much adoe to stand; yet out of the church-porch he made a shift to stagger, and up into the streete. When he was there (reeling homewards to his own house) the boyes at play in the street spied him. At the first sight, halfe afraid of his blacke face, they ran apace away from him; yet at last, when a great company of the' were gathered together, they turnd to him againe, and followed him close, shouting and crying after him, Deuill, Deuill, Deuill.

When *Smug*, as druncke as he was, heard them call him Deuill, Deuill, Deuill, he maruailed much in his mind wherefore they called him so (for alas he knew not); had they called him drunckard it would neuer haue greeu'd him, for that he knew to be his ordinary title. Still followed the boyes at his heels, crying (as they begun) Deuill, Deuill, Deuill, throwing old shoes, bones, and pibble stones after him.

So long they followed him, that they made him (whole druncke) halfe mad; yet all he could do he could not mend it: the boyes loued him so well, they would not leaue him till they saw him at his door.

His wife (busie within) hearing the noise and shoute the boyes made, looked out, and spyed her owne sweete husband in that sweete taking; presently shee got him in a doores, and then began (very prittily) to make use of her tongue to him. After many brabbling wordes betweene them, she shewed him a glasse, in which he saw the shaddow of his face in that most pittifull case. Then *Smug* began to sweare (not like a smith I can tell you) gogs non nes, foote and nayles, thou most abominable whore, doth thou show me the Deuill to fright

me from the little share of wit which I haue? an thy Deuill were ten Deuils I am not afraid of him, and that thou shalt quickly see: with that he tooke his hammer from his side (still seeing his owne sweete shadow in the glasse which he tooke to be the Deuill), strooke at it, and with one blow clattered the glasse all in pieces.

Now you whore (sayd he) where is your deuill now? I thinke I haue mauld him yfaith: bring your deuills to me doth thou? thou whore? Alasse! sweet *Smug* (quoth she, seeing him so very much mooued), be patient, I preethe sweet chuche; and shewing him the crackt frame: looke—here is no Deuill, therefore I preethe, sweet *Oliuer*, be quiet.

Nay (quoth *Smug*) I'le ticle your Deuills, yfaith, and your Deuills come to molest me within mine owne house upon mine owne ground, I'le Deuill them. Come good sweet heart (qd. she), now thou hast beaten the Deuill away let us goe to bed. After a quarter of an houre's fretting, with very good words she got him to bed. In the morning when shee knew his sleepe had made him sober, she shewed him his blacke face againe in another glasse, which when he saw, and knew well what he saw, he blusht, but the best was it could not be seene till his visard was taken off with faire water and soape; then he confest himselfe faultie, promised amends, and went very close to his labour.

How cunningly Smug scaped the Keeper and others that pursued him, and making them run up and downe from place to place to seeke him in vaine.

Smug and his mad crew of venison eaters, one night being at their busines, were suddainely set upon by their old enemy the keeper, and two or three more, that after they had taken great paines to get their prey, and bound it up hansomely, ready to beare it away, they were forst to fly and leaue it behind them, for feare of a further mischief. The miller he ran one way, and nimbler *Sir John* in his buckram cassock another way, and *Smug* another way, as fast as if they had beene trained up to running all their life time. They had not time to take their leaues one of another, or appoint a place of meeting.

As these deere-stealers tooke seuerall waies to run, so the keeper and his consorts seuered themselues to pursue them; one ran after the miller, another after *Sir John*, and two or three after *Smug*; for he was the onely man they looked for, though all of them were knowne to the keeper well enough. The miller he ran not far ere he was staid with a good pat on his pate. *Sir John's* followers followed so close, that he was driuen to leape for his liberty ouer a ditch; ouer he should haue leapt, but indeed a short leape laid him all along in the ditch, and so he was staid and taken up with neuer a dry thred on him. *Smug* he ran directly homewards, followed at the heeles by the keeper and another, yet they could not ouertake him.

When he got to Edmonton, with running to and fro,

up one lane and downe another, he got out of sight of his pursuers, but it was so late he could not get into any house to hide him, saue his owne, and into that he durst not goe, fearing they would goe thither to seeke him.

A pretty while he stood studdying which way to shift for himselfe, resolving one while to do this thing, another while that, another while another. At last standing thus in a browne studdy, turning his eyes first one way, then another, one while up, another while downe, he spied the signe of the White Horse (not painted upon a boord, as they use to be heere in the city), but fashioned out of timber, and set gallantly ouer the signe post. Masse (qd. he), I care not greatly if I get up and bestride this white horse, and make another S. George heere in *Edmonton*. I'll do it y'faith; it may be I may sit safer so than any way else: if I do, I do, if I do not, I know the worst on't; tis but wearing two stocks upon one leg, and I am as well able to indure it now as ere I was. Up to the White Horse he got, and back'd him brauely with his arm stretch'd out, his hammer in his hand instead of a sword, and the lippit of his red cap tied under his chin, which stood for his helmet most featly.

While he sat thus gallantly strutting upon his wooden horse (yet no hobby horse) the keeper that followed him so close to haue gotten him into his keeping, (with them together that was with him) went peaking and preying in euery corner of the street to find him, twice and thrice backward and forward, they went under him; and yet could not see him, but he saw them well enough.

When they had lost an houre's labor or thereabouts, in seeking after him without doores, they resolved another

while to seeke him within. Come, said the keeper to the other, let us go search the Innes, and first this—this White horse is his dayly haunt, and therefore it may be we shall finde him heere this night. Com, let us in.

As the keeper was going into the White horse (under *Smug*) his fellow looking up bad him stay. Stay (quoth the keeper); wherefore should I stay? Why look you (said the other); this is not the White horse, as you take it to be; this is the George. Masse (qd. the keeper) 'tis the George indeed; come let's over to the White horse. When they had crost the way (as they thought to the White horse) they found the George againe. Zoundes (qd. the keeper) Jacke, this is the George too; what, haue we two Georges in *Edmonton*? foot man, where are we? If this be *Edmonton*, heere was but one George yesterday, and the White horse over against it; now heere are two Georges one against another: this is strange. 'Tis very strange indeed (qd. the other bones man); are we not at *Hodsdon*? for thou knowest the two Georges are in *Hodsdon*. Masse, thou saiest true, Jack, and by these signes this should be *Hodsdon*. Come, come; (qd. the other); we mistook our way in the darke; this is *Hodsdon*; come, let's up to *Edmonton*. Content (qd. the keeper,) and together they ran as fast as they could to *Hodsdon* to finde Edmonton.

Then *Smug*, who heard all their talke, and sat laughing ready to wray himselfe with laughter, saw them trudging towards *Hodsdon*, he got down from his white horse, and went to bed, leaving them to their wilde goose chace to seek him. When they come to *Hodsdon*, there they saw the two Georges too (for there the signes stood indeed). Then they chaf'd, swore, and stamp't like mad men, curs'd

poore *Smug* and his company, and vowed to be the death of him, if ere they could take him handsomely : then they tooke up their lodging for that night, and the next morning went home to their businesse.

How Smug's wife locked him in a doores, when he would haue gone abroad a swaggering, and what shift hee made to get out and amongst them.

Smug one day very early prepared himselfe to goe abroad (according to promise the day before), a drinking, and to go handsomely to it, he tricked himselfe up in his hollyday suit, put on a cleane band and his red cap, that he might go through stich with his busines, without crosse or controlement ; but, alas ! eene as he was ready to go downe the staires, his wife perceiuing his intent, presently (to crosse him) stept out of the chamber before him, puld the doore after her, and lockt him in. Now (said she), and you be hot with anger, walke up and doune and coole yourselfe ; if your walke tire you, lie doune and rest you, for you shall rest upon no ale-bench this day.

This crosse deed and these cutting words of hers went to him, that he was almost in as bad a case with fretting, as he had bin the day before with drinking ; yet he saw there was no remedy but patience ; for neither faire words nor foule could make her turne the key to let him out.

From the time he rose till almost dinner time, he walked up and downe in his chamber chafing, fretting, and mumbling, like poore *Tom of Bedlam*, in his barne or howling inne.

At last, to crosse his wife (as well as she had crost him), he took an empty can that stood by upon a little table, tyed it to the end of a long string, and put it out at his chamber window, where it hung dangling like the poore men's bore at Ludgate, and he himselfe, like the bawling borman, stood peeping through his lattice, crying, For the Lord's sake, for the Lord's sake, good people, pittie a poore prisoner; making his can daunce at the end of his whip-cord, with drawing it up and downe, as nimbly as one of the little thred puppets in the lamentable motion of Dives and Lazarus. Wel there he stood in this maner bawling and yawling, till he had drawn as great a company of people together as the babling of a cheating mountebanke, or the foule furd throat of an itchy ballad singer in a faire or market time. To conclude, when his wife saw such a company of people, men, women, and children gathered about him, she (poore wretch) ashamed to heare him, and vext at those that stood gaping about him, in a chafing heate as she lockt him in, let him out, and was glad to be so rid of him.

How Smug was reuenged on his wife for locking him in a doores.

The day succeeding this unkind crosse, *Smug* rose againe very early, and put on working day apparell, with his old sheepes russet button cap, and went to worke as hard as if he had wrought for a wager; he laboured at the forge (but 'twas to forge a piece of knavery) till his sweaty face reeked againe.

All the day long wrought he thus hard without any stop, stay, or hinderance; nay, which is more to be won-

dred at, he dranke not aboue thrice all day, and that was but, as he used to cal it, smal comfort, commonly called smal beere.

His wife to see him worke so close (as she well might), meruailed, and gaue him as kinde words as he could wish for, and swar by the faith of her body, she was glad to see such a sudden alteration. He still plying his work, gaue her good words for her good words, very kindly.

When his labor had brought on the evening (which brings an end to labour) he very kindly requested his wife to walke with him to nip themselues a little in the euening, for it was a very fine frosty moon-light euening. She very kindly tooke his kinde request, and went with him. Very louing walked they together, arme and arme, out at townes end, one while this way, and another while that, even as it pleased him (her most venterous leader) to lead her. They walked thus louingly up and doune together so long that there was not a candle burning, nor one eye open in the village; then home apace he hyed him. When he was come to the doore, ready to enter, he sent his wife on a freeueles errand, to the turning stile, to his honest neighbour *Noddamus*. While she, poore woman, was about his bidding, mistrusting no knauery to be done against her, he presently turnd the key on the outside to let himself in, and on the inside to locke her out. When she was returned from the place aforenamed, and found the doore lockt, and the key sticking in the inside, she knockt, and with her knocking cald, but honest *Smug* lay snug, and would neither rise to let her in, nor make her any answer. Then she knew not what to doe, but (as women do want-

ing their wills), sat and cryed to ease her stomacke; his resolution was set to make her sit all that night, to knock her heeles and blow her nailes at the doore, like a poore black-bitten stal-creeper, neuer did she chatter better with anger, then she did at that time with the coldnesse of the weather, that made her teeth go faster than her tongue.

When she saw that neither reasonable knocking nor unreasonable calling could raise him, she tooke up a great flint stone, and beate against the doore as though she would haue beat it downe. Then *Smug* started up to the window in his shirt, and very strangely asked who it was kept such a housing at the doore? Marry good man drunkard (qd. shee) it is I that knock; wherefore hast thou lockt me out? Nay first, (qd. *Smug*) answer me; wherefore didst thou locke me in? 'twas so lately don, I am sure thou hast not forgot it; or if thou hast, thou seest I have not.

*Thou lockst me in, I have lockt thee out,
Good Agnis walke, goe walke about.*

So talke no longer, for I swear by my red cap, and by *Bacchus* the God of good liquor, I meane to keep thee out all night, as thou kepst me in all day, and so sweet Agnis, till between seuen and eight in the morning, farewell.

To bed went he againe, and left her to shift for herselfe til morning. How they agreed when they came together, I know not, but you may judge she scarce tooke it patiently.

How Smug quarreld with his fellowes, and was ready to fight about the singing of a catch, and how till they turned it to his mind, he would not be quieted.

Smug one day being very merry with his honest swilling associates, from drinking fell to singing, and amongst all the od alehouse catches they had up, this was one, *I'le ty my mare in thy ground*: this *I'le ty my mare in thy ground*, was tost so long to and fro, betweene *Smug*, the miller, and the merry Parson, that *Smug* had forgot he was singing a catch, and began to quarrel with the Parson, thinking verrily, he had meant (as he said in his song) *to ty his mare in his ground. Will you ty your mare in my ground?* (said *Smug*). The Parson he sung still, *I'le ty my mare in thy ground. In my ground?* (said *Smug*). Still went the Parson forward with his catch, *I'le ty my mare in thy ground, &c.* Then *Smug* began to swagger indeed, and swore if he tyed his mare in his ground, he woulde make his cap and scull cleave together: besides, he would give his mare such a drench, that after the drinke she should never eate more. The Parson seeing *Smug's* rage increasing, with very good words intreated him to be patient, and cast away choller, for as I am an honest Sir *John* and a boone companion meant no harme in the world. I did but sing the catch, as the catch was. But all these kinde words and intreaties, could not win *Smug* to patience, till M. Parson turnd his song and himselfe in singing from him to the Miller: when they were as good friends as could be, and (in kindnesse) went

again to drinke together, till they were all laid to sleepe together.

How Smug, being drunke in bed, p—t upon his Wife through a cullender instead of a Chamber Pot.

Labouring at the liquor al day, many times tir'd *Smug* far worse than his labour at the forge, as it was often seene by him; but most especially at this time, that I am now to speake of: for at this time he had labor'd so hard, (and no body blame him) for he east not from morning til night, that his legs were not able to beare him to bed; but what he could not do himselfe for himselfe, the helping hands of some kind neighbours and friends did: in bed they laid him, and so left him to get that sleeping that he lost waking. There lay he, grunting and growning like a hog in a sty, turning two and fro from one side of the bed to t'other; for the liquor wrought so within him, that he could not sleepe as he used to drinke (soundly) for the life of him. Within halfe an houre after he had lien thus, tumbling and tossing, as if he had lien upon nettles, his wife went to bed to him, to rest after her (indeed) true labor, but (poore woman) she found lesse rest there then in her labor; for he kept such a retching and stretching himselfe, such a hunching and punching with his leggs and elbowes, that she might haue lien better at ease betweene two madmen, then by him in that taking. As he lay thus laboring (laden and ouer laden) with the liquor he had taken, the liquor lay laboring within him for vent, which, though he could ~~very~~ hardly rise to giue it hansomly, yet he did his good will, and reached out

of the bed for a p—pot, but instead of a p—pot, he tooke a cullender, (that stood close by his bed, upon a settle) and kneeling up right in his bed, let his ill digested liquor run as freely into it and through it, upon his slumbring wife, as a conduite pipe at waste.

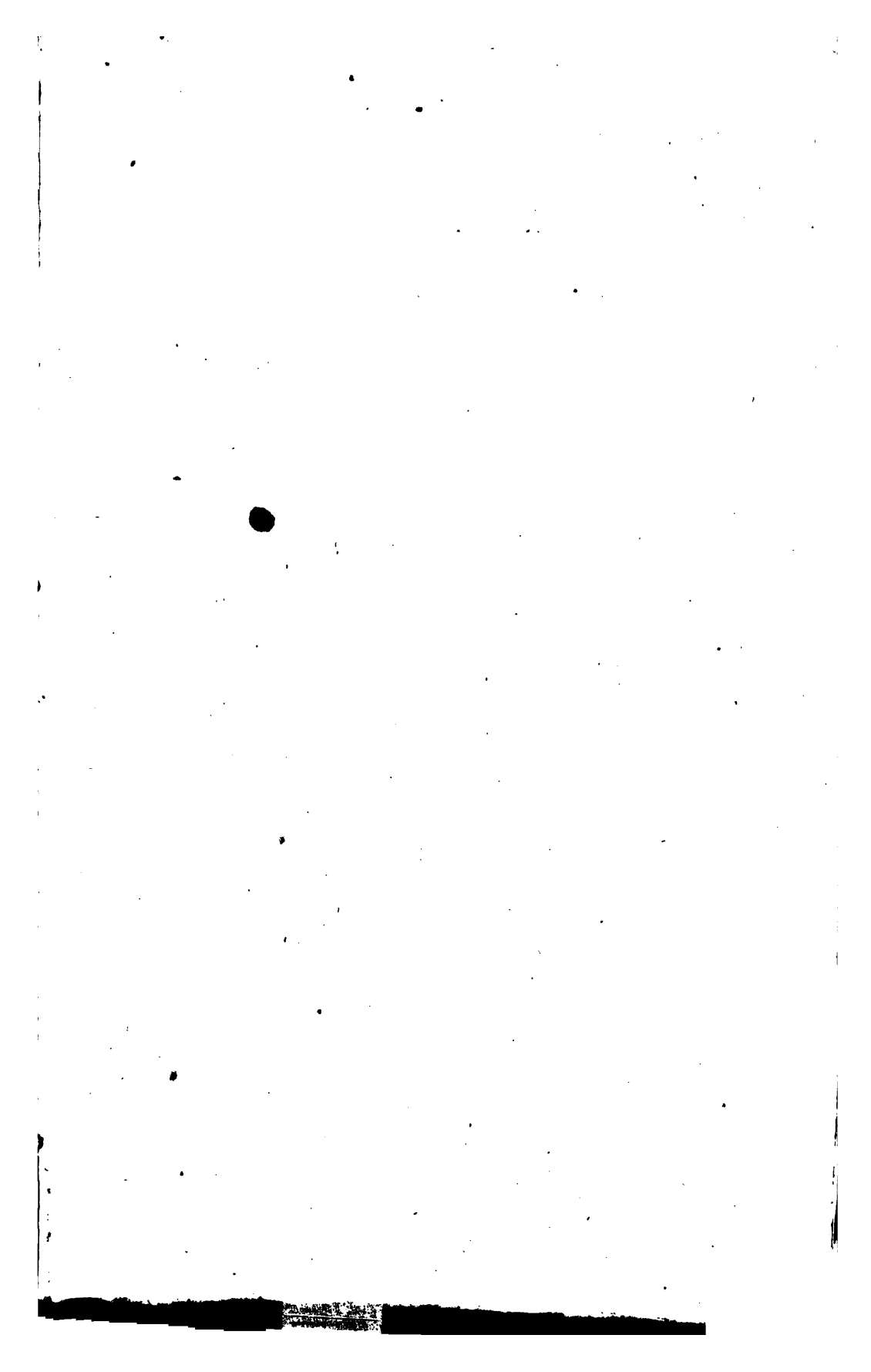
She presently (feeling herselfe warme wet) start up, and begun to brabble with him, and cry shame upon him for dooing such a beastly deed. Why thou whore, (qd. *Smug*) wilt thou not giue me leaue to p—e? if thou crosest my humor but with two crosse words more, I'll breake the p—e-pot about the pate of thee; therefore be quiet.

But for al his threatning, she would not hold her tongue, that she kept talking stil, til *Smug's* fists walked about her eares. There was such a sore battaile in the bed betweene them, as thinke neare was seene betweene bed fellowes before, and had not a candle and a cleane pair of sheetes, beene quickly carried up to part them, there would haue beene great blood-shed.

FINIS.

THO. BREWER.





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